

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The catheter of claim [[18]] 21, wherein a proximal portion of the channel includes a C-shaped cross-sectional profile, and a distal portion of the channel includes a U-shaped cross-sectional profile.

20. (Original) The catheter of claim [[18]] 21, wherein a proximal portion of the channel includes a U-shaped cross-sectional profile, and a distal portion of the channel includes a C-shaped cross-sectional profile.

21. (New) A catheter for use in biliary procedures, the catheter comprising a shaft having a proximal end and a distal end and defining:

a guidewire lumen carried by the shaft extending from a location proximal the distal end of the shaft to a first location proximate the distal end of the shaft;

an extended opening into the guidewire lumen through a wall of the shaft and extending longitudinally from a second location proximate the first location to the distal end of the shaft, wherein the extended opening and the guidewire lumen combined define a channel.

22. (New) A kit for use in biliary procedures comprising:

a catheter having a shaft with a proximal end and a distal end, the catheter defining a guidewire lumen extending through at least a distal portion of the shaft and a channel providing access to the guide wire lumen, the channel extending longitudinally from a location distal the proximal end of the catheter to the distal end of the shaft; and

an elongate tubular member sized slide through a portion of the guidewire lumen, the elongate tubular member being sized to prevent it from moving laterally through at least a portion of the channel.

23. (New) The catheter kit of claim 22, wherein the channel has a U-shape along a first portion and a C-shape along a second portion, wherein the elongate tubular member is sized and shaped to prevent it from laterally exiting the channel in along the second portion.

24. (New) The catheter kit of claim 23, wherein the first portion is distal of the second portion.

25. (New) The catheter kit of claim 23, wherein the first portion is proximal of the second portion.

26. (New) The catheter kit of claim 22, wherein the elongate tubular member is longer than the catheter.

27. (New) The catheter kit of claim 22, wherein the elongate member includes an outer portion sized to fit within at least a portion of the channel.

28. (New) The catheter kit of claim 27, wherein the outer portion is axially elongated.

29. (New) The catheter kit of claim 28, wherein the outer portion is shaped to mate against an axial portion of the channel.

30. (New) The catheter kit of claim 22, wherein the elongate tubular member defines a lumen adapted to receive a guidewire.

31. (New) The catheter kit of claim 22, wherein the catheter comprises entry means allowing entry of the elongate member into the guidewire lumen.

32. (New) The catheter kit of claim 31, wherein the entry means includes an opening in the catheter shaft connected to the channel, the opening being sized for passage of the elongate member therethrough.

33. (New) The catheter kit of claim 31, wherein the entry means includes a U-shaped portion of the channel.

34. (New) A method of inserting a catheter comprising:
advancing a first guidewire of a first size to a first desired location in a patient;
advancing a tubular member over the first guidewire, the tubular member having an outer diameter;
advancing a catheter having a proximal end and a distal end and defining a guidewire lumen extending distally from the proximal end of the catheter and a channel extending proximally from the distal end of the catheter over the tubular member by:
passing the tubular member into the channel;
advancing the catheter distally with respect to the tubular member; and
passing the tubular member into the guidewire lumen.

35. (New) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the first guidewire is small enough to pass laterally out of the catheter through the channel; and
the tubular member is too large to pass laterally out of the catheter through a portion of the channel.

36. (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising:
removing the first guidewire and the tubular member; and
advancing a second guidewire that is larger than the first guidewire distally into the catheter, through the guidewire lumen and into the channel.

37. (New) The method of claim 36, further comprising:
advancing the second guidewire beyond the distal end of the catheter; and

advancing the second guidewire to a second desired location in the patient.

38. (New) The method of claim 36, wherein the second guidewire is too large to pass laterally out of the catheter through a portion of the channel.